

DECLASSIFIED

MONDAY
DECEMBER 21, 1953

André de Staercke came around this morning.

He believes ~~that~~ Foster's press conference was a ~~very~~ salutary reminder to the French of the necessity of making up their minds definitely on their policy toward Germany. He was in England for Sir Winston's birthday party and had a long talk with the Prime Minister regarding EDC which, from other things I have heard, seems greatly to have influenced Sir Winston's recent attitude in that regard. ~~Now~~ Confidentially, he told me ~~that~~ Churchill is now considering at an appropriate time suggesting that a volunteer brigade or even division of Britishers might be raised and incorporated in the European Army. This contingent would be paid and equipped by the British Government. The effect of this, if it were done, might be electric. Meanwhile it is important to preserve secrecy on the subject and de Staercke will probably go to London in mid-January to have a talk with the P.M. about it.

The stalemate at Versailles over the election of a President continues.

We lunched today at Madame Esmond's. Her daughters, Lulu de Waldner and Madame Billotte were there. They call this regular Monday gathering "The Club", and Madame Esmond is the President and provider of victuals. She has lovely pictures, including three exquisite small Renoirs and some ~~very~~ unusual Hubert Roberts, as well as the most attractive Alfred Dreux ~~that~~ I have seen anywhere. The members of the Club present were the André de Vilmorins, Marie Louise Bousquet, Geoffrey de Waldner and Louise de Vilmorin. E. and I were elected permanent life members. There was great gaiety of conversation and we all had a good time. Everyone present expressed concern over what was ~~happening~~ ^{happening} at Versailles and said they felt ashamed of the spectacle it presented to the outside world. My intervention to the effect that American Presidential elections disturbed our population for a whole year did not seem to be any comfort to them.

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